

A
SERMON
Upon the xv verse of
the viii Chapter of
JOHN.



By
D^r DONNE
DEAN OF
PAULS.



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MEMORIAL

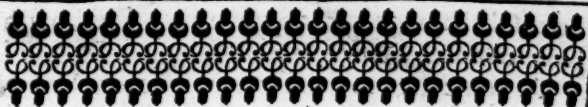
UPON THE XXVth OF

JOHN

BY DONNE

1641

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John 8. 15.

I judge no man.



He rivers of Paradise did not all runne one way, and yet they flowed from one head. The sentences of the Scripture flow all from one head, from the holy Ghost, and yet they seem to present divers senses, and to admit divers interpretations: in such an appearance doth the text differ from that which I handled in the morning. And as heretofore I found it an usuall and acceptable labour, to employ our evening exercises upon the vindicating of such places of Scripture, as our adversaries of the Romane Church had detorted in some points of controverſie between them and us, and restoring those places to their true sense (which course I held constantly for one whole year) so I think it an usuall and acceptable labour now, to employ for a time these evening exercises, to reconcile some such places of Scripture as may at first sight seem to differ one from another. In the morning we saw

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how Christ judged all; now we are to see how he judgeth none, *I judge no man.*

To come then to these present words, here we have the same person Christ Jesus; and hath he not the same office? is not he Judge? certainly though he retain all his other offices, though he be the Redeemer, and hath shed blood, in value satisfactorie for all our sinnes; though he be our Advocate and plead for us in heaven, and present our evidence to that kingdome, written in his blood, sealed in his wounds: yet if he be not our Judge, we cannot stand in judgement. Shall he be our Judge, and is he not our Judge yet? long before we were, he was our Judge, at the separation of the elect and reprobate in Gods eternall decree: was he our Judge then, and is he not still? still he is present in his Church, and cleares us in all scruples, rectifies us in all errors, erects us in all dejections of spirit, pronounces peace and reconciliation in all apprehensions of his judgements, by his word, by his sacraments: was he, and is he, and shall he not be our Judge still? *I am sure my Redemer liveth, and he shall stand at the last day on the earth;* so that Christ Jesus is the same to day, and yesterday, and for ever, before the world began, and world without end; *sicut erat in principio*, as he was in the beginning, he is, and shall be ever our Judge.

Job 19. 25.

So that then these words are not *de tempore*, but *de modo*: there was never any time when Christ was not Judge; but there were some manner of
judge-

judgements, which Christ did never exercise. And Christ had no commission which he did not execute, for he did all his Fathers will. First, *In secularibus*, in civil and criminall businesses, which belong meerly to the judicature and cognisance of the world, *Judicat neminem*, Christ judges no man. Secondly, *Secundum carnem*, so as they to whom Christ spoke this, who judged (as himself sayes here) according to fleshly affections, *Judicat neminem*, He judges no man. And thirdly, *Ad interuencionem*, so as that upon that judgement a man should despair of any reconciliation, any reintegration with God again, and be without hope of pardon or remission of finnes in this world, *Judicat neminem*, He judges no man. First, Christ usurps upon no mans jurisdictions; that were against justice. Secondly, he imputes no false things to any man; that were against charitie. Thirdly, Christ induces no man to desperation; that were against faith: and against justice, against charitie, against faith, *Judicat neminem*.

First then, Christ judges not in secular judgements, and we note his absence therein, first in civil matters. When one of the companie said unto him, *Master, bid my brother divide the inheritance with me*, (as S. Augustine sayes) the partie thought his cause to be just, and he thought Christ to be a competent Judge in the cause; yet Christ declines the judgement, disavows the authoritie, and he answers, *Homo, quis me constituit judicem? Man, who made me a judge between you two?* That

I Part.

Luk. 12. 14.

generall which we had in the morning, *Omne iudicium*, The Sonne hath all judgement, here is an exception of the same Judges making: for in secular judgement *Nemo constituit*, He had no commission; and therefore *Judicat neminem*, He judges no man: he forbore in civil, he forbore in criminall matters too. For when the woman taken in adulterie was brought before him, he condemned her not: he undertook no office of a Judge, but of a sweet and spirituall counsellour, *Go and sinne no more*, for this was his element, his tribunall.

When then Christ sayes of himself with such a pregnant negative, *Quis me constituit iudicem?* may not we say so too, to his pretended Vicar the Bishop of Rome? *Quis te?* Who made you a judge of kings, and that you should depose them in criminall causes? or who made you proprietour of kingdomes, that you should dispose of them as of civil inheritance? when to countenance such a pretence, they detort places of Scripture not onely perversly, but senselessly, blasphemously, and ridiculously (as ridiculously as in their pasquils) when in an undiscreet shamelesnesse, to make their power greater then it is, they make their fault greater then it is too, and fill their histories with kings deposed by Popes, which in truth were not deposed by them (for in that they are more innocent then they confesse themselves) when some of their authours say that the Primitive Church abstained from deposing of the Emperours, onely because she was not strong enough to do it; when
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some of them say that all the Christian kingdomes of the earth may fall into the Church of Rome by faults in those princes; when some of them say that *de facto* the Pope hath alreadie a good title to every Christian kingdome; when some of them say the world will never be well governed till the Pope himself puts himself in possession of all (all which severall propositions are in severall authours of good reputation amongst them) will he not endure Christs own question, *Quis te constituit?* Who made you a judge of all this? if they say Christ did, did he it in his doctrine? it is hard to pretend that: for such an institution as that must have very cleare, very pregnant words to carrie it. Did he do it by his example and practise? we see he abstained in civil, he abstained in criminall causes. When they come to their last shift, that Christ did exercise judiciarie authoritie, when he whipt merchants out of the temple, when he cursed the fig-tree, and damnfied the owner thereof, when he destroyed the herd of swine (for there, say they, the devil was but the executioner, Christ was the Judge) to all these and such as these, it is enough to say all these were miraculous and not ordinarie: and though it might seem half a miracle, how that Bishops should exercise so much authoritie as he hath done, over the world; yet when we look nearer; and see his means that he hath done all this by, by massacres, & that of millions, by withdrawing subjects from their allegiance, by assassinating and murdering of princes; when we

know that miracles are without means, and we see the means of his proceedings, the miracle ceaseth: howsoever that Bishop, as Christs Vicar, can claim no other power then was ordinarie in Christ, and so exercised by Christ; and so *judicat neminem*, In secular judgement Christ judges no man; and therefore that Bishop, as his Vicar, should not.

II Part.

Secondly, Christ judges no man by calumnie, by imputing or laying false aspersions upon him, nor true things extrajudicially: for that is a degree of calumnie, and slander, and detraction, so large a field, as that we may fight out the last drop of our blood, preach out the last gasp of our breath, before we overcome it. Those to whom Christ spoke here, were such as gave perverse judgements, and calumniated the censures upon him; and so he judges no man: we need not insist upon that, for it is *manifestè verum*: but that we may see our danger and our dutie, what calumnie is, and see how to avoid it actively, and how to bear it passively, I must by your leave stop a little upon it.

When we would present to you that monster, slander and calumnie, though it be hard to bring it within any compasse of a division, yet to take the largeness of the School, and say that every calumnie is either direct or indirect, that will comprehend all; and then a direct calumnie will have three branches; Either to lay a false and unjust imputation; Or else to aggravate a just imputation with unnecessary, but heaveie circumstances;

Or

Or thirdly, to reveal a fault which in it self was secret, and I by no dutie bound to discover it. And then the indirect calumnie will have three branches too; Either to deny expressly some good that is in another; Or to smother it in silence, when my testimonie were due to him, and might advantage him; Or lastly, to diminish his good parts, and say they are well, but not such as the world esteems them to be. Collect them again (for that is all we are able to do) that he is a direct calumniator, that imputes a false crime, that aggravateth a true crime, that discovers any crime extrajudicially; That he is an indirect calumniator, that denies another mans sufficiencies, ~~that conceals them~~, that diminishes them. Take in some of *S. Bernards* examples of these rules, that it is a calumnie to say, *Dolco vehementer*, I am sorie at the heart for such a man, because I love him, but I would never draw him from such and such vice; or to say, *Per me nunquam innotuisset*, I should never have spoken of it; yet since all the world talks of it, the truth must not be disguised; and so take occasion to discover a fault which no bodie knew before, and thereby, as the same Father sayes, *Cum gravamine & tarditate aggredi maledictionem*, to cut a mans throat gravely and soberly, and so much the more perswasively, because he seems and pretends to do it all against his will. This being the rule, and this being the example, who amongst us is free from the passive calumnie? whom amongst us hath not some other man calumniated? nay, who
is

is free from the active part: which of us hath not in some of these degrees calumniated some other?

Pfal. 50. 20

But those of whom Christ makes this exception here, that he judges no man as they judge, were such calumniatours as *David* speaks of, *Sedens adversus fratrem tuum loquebaris, Thou satest and spakest against thy neighbour:* as *S. Augustine* notes upon that place, *Non transitorie, non surreptionis passione, sed quasi ad hoc vacans;* Not by chance and unawares, not in passion, because he had offended thee; not for companie, because thou wouldst be of their mindes, but as though thy profession would bear thee out in it, to leave the cause, and lay an aspersiō upon the person, so thou art a calumniatour. *They eat up my people like bread,* as *David* sayes in Gods person: and upon those words of the same Prophet, sayes the same Father, *De ceteris,* When we eat of any thing else, we taste of this dish, and we taste of that. *Non semper hoc olus,* sayes he; We do not alwayes eat of one fallēt, one meat, one kinde of fruit; *sed semper panem;* whatsoever we eat else, we eat bread: howsoever they employed their thoughts or their wits otherwise, it was ever one exercise of them to caluminate Christ Jesus. And in that kinde of calumnie, which is the bitterest of all, they abounded most, which is, in scorn and derision. *David* and *Jeh,* who were slander-proof in a good measure, yet every where complain passionately, that they were made a scorn, that the

Pfal. 53. 5.

wits

wits made libels, that drunkards sung songs, that
fools and children of fools derided them: and
when *Saul* was in his last, but worst agonie, and
had abandoned himself to a present death, and
prayed his armour-bearer to kill him, it was not
because the uncircumcised should not kill him, for
he desired death, and he had their deadly arrows
alreadie in his bosome; but it was (as it is expres-
sed there) lest the uncircumcised should come and
abuse him; he was afraid of scorn, when he had but
a few minutes of life. Since then Christ judgeth
no man, as they did, *Secundum carnem*, neither *Se-
cundum carnem ejus*, according to the outward
appearance (for they thought no better of Christ
then he seemed to be) (as some Fathers take that
phrase) *Nec secundum carnem suam*, nor according to
his own fleshly passions, as some others take it;
judge not you neither. First, *judge not that ye be
not judged*, that is, (as *Ambrose* interprets it well
enough) *Nolite judicare de judiciis Dei*, When you
see Gods judgements fall upon a man, do not you
judge that that man sinned more then you; when
you see another man born blinde, do not you think
that he or his father had sinned, and that you are
onely derived from a pure generation; especially
Non maledicas surdo, *Speak not evil of the deaf that
heares not*, that is, as *Gregorie* interprets it (if not
literally, yet applicably and usefully) Calumniate
not him who is absent, and cannot defend himself.
It is the devils office to be *Accusator fratrum*: and
though God do not say in the Law, *Non erit*, yet
Z he

Matt. 7.1.

Lev. 19. 14.

he sayes, *Non eris criminator*; It is not plainly, *There shall be no informer*: for as we dispute, and for the most part affirm in the School, that though we could, we may destroy no entire *species* of the creatures which God made at first, though it were a tiger or a viper, because this were to take one link of Gods chain out of the world; so such vermin as informers, may not for some good use that is of them be taken away: though it be not, *Non erit*, *There shall be none*; yet it is at least by way of good counsel to thee, *Non eris*. Thou shalt not be the man, thou shalt not be the informer: and for resisting those that are, we are bound, not onely not to burn our neighbours house, but to help him, if casually his house fall on fire: we are bound, where we have authoritie, to stop the mouthes of other calumniatours; where we have

Pro. 25-23.

no authoritie, yet (since *as the northwinde driveth away rain, so an angrie countenance driveth away a backbiting tongue*) at least to deal so with a libeller, with a calumniatour: for he that looks pleasantly, and hearkens willingly to one libell, makes another, occasions a second. Alwayes remember *Dauids* case, when he thought he had been giving judgement against another, he was more severe, more heavie then the law admitted: the Law was, that he that had stolen the sheep, should restore fourefold; *And Dauids anger was kindled*, sayes the text, *and he swore, As the Lord liveth, that man shall restore fourefold: Et filius mortis*, and he shall surely die. *O judicis effluentem justitiam! O superabundant*

2. Sam. 12. 5.

bundant and overflowing justice, when we judge another in passion! But this is *judicium secundum carnē*, according to which Christ judgeth no man: for Christ is Love, and that *non cogitat malum*, *Love thinks no evil* any way; the charitable man neither meditates evil against another, nor beleeves easily any evil to be in another, though it be told him.

1. Cor. 13. 5.

Lastly, Christ judgeth no man *Ad internecionem*, he judges no man so in this world, as to give a finall condemnation upon him here; there is no error in any of his judgements, but there is an appeal from all his judgements in this world, there is a verdict against every man; every man may finde his case recorded, and his sinne condemned in the Law; and in the Prophets there is a verdict, but before judgement God would have every man saved by his blood, by the apprehension and application of the gracious promises of the Gospel to his case, and his conscience. Christ judgeth no man so as that he should see no remedie but to curse God and die, nor so as that he should say his sinne were greater then God could forgive: *For God sent not his Sonne into the world to condemne the world, but that the world through him might be saved.*

John 3. 17.

Do not then give malicious evidence against thy self, do not weaken the merit, nor lessen the value of the blood of thy Saviour, as though thy sinne were greater then it is. Doth God desire thy blood now, when he hath abundantly satisfied

Matt. 16. 18

his justice with the blood of his Sonne for thee? what hast thou done? hast thou come hypocritically to this place, upon collaterall reasons, and not upon the direct service of God, not for love of information or reformation of thy self? if that be thy case, yet, *If a man will heare my word, sayes Christ, and beleerve it not, I judge him not, he hath one that judgeth him; and who is that? The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him: it shall, but when? It shall judge him, sayes Christ, at the last day: for till the last day, the day of his death, no man is past recoverie, no mans salvation is impossible. Hast thou gone further then this? hast thou committed scruples of diffidence and distrust of Gods mercie, and so tasted of the lees of desperation? It is true, *Perpetrare flagitium, est mors anima; sed desperare, est descensus ad inferos; In every sinne thy soul dies, but in desperation it descends into hell. But yet, Porta inferi non prevalebunt, The gates of hell shall not prevail against thee. Assist thy self, argue thine own case; desperation it self may be without infidelitie, desperation as well as hope is rooted in the desire of happinesse. Desperation proceeds out of a fear of God, and horreur of sinne: desperation may consist with faith thus farre, that a man may have a true and faithfull opinion in the generall, that there is remission of sinnes to be had in the Church, and yet have a corrupt imagination in the particular, that to him in this sinfull estate that he is in, this remission of sinnes shall not be applied; so that the resolu-**

resolution of the School is good, *Desperatio potest esse ex solo excessu boni*, Desperation may proceed out of excess of that which is good in it self, from any excessive over-fearing of Gods justice, from any excessive over-hating thine own sinnes. *Et virtute quis male utitur?* can any man make so ill use of so great vertues as the fear of God and hatred of sinne: yes, they may: so forward a weed is sinne, as that it can spring out of any root: and therefore if it have done so in thee, and thou thereby hast made thy case the harder, yet know still, that *Objectum spei est arduum & possibile*, The true object of hope is that which is hard to come by, yet possible to come by. And therefore as *David* said, *By my God have I leapt over the wall*, so by thy God thou must break through the wall, through this wall of obduration which thou thy self hast begun to build about thy self. Feather thy wings again, which even the flames of hell have touched in these beginnings of desperation; feather them again with this text, *Neminem judicat*, Christ judgeth no man so as a desperate man judges himself: do not make thy self beleave that thou hast sinned against the holy Ghost, for this is the nearest step thou hast made unto it, to think that thou hast done it: walk in that field, in the Scriptures of God, and from the first flower at the entrance, the flower of Paradise, *Semen mulieris*, the generall promise that the seed of the woman should bruiſe the serpents head, to the last word of that Meſſias upon the crosse, *Consummatum est*,

2 Sam. 23.
30.

that all that was promised for us, is now performed; and from the first to the last thou shalt finde the savour of life in all those flowers: walk over the same alley again, and consider the first man Adam in the beginning, who involved thee in originall sinne, and the thief upon the crosse, who had continued in actuall sinnes all his life, and sealed all with the sinne of reviling Christ himself, and a little before his expiration, and yet recovered Paradise that day; and see if thou canst make any shift to exclude thy self. Receive the fragrancie of all these cordials, *Vivit Dominus, As the Lord liveth, I would not the death of a sinner; Quando-cunque, At what time soever a sinner repenteth*, and of this text, *Neminem judicat*, Christ judgeth no man to destruction here; and if thou finde after all these antidotes a suspicious aire, a suspicious working in that *Impossibile est*, that *it is impossible for them who were once enlightened, if they fall away, to renew them again by repentance*; sprinkle upon that wormwood of *Impossibile est*, that Manna of *Quorum remisistis, Whose sinnes ye remit, they are remitted*; and then it will have another taste of thee, and then thou wilt see that that impossibilitie lies onely upon them who are utterly fallen away into an absolute apostasie and infidelitie, that make a mock of Christ, and crucifie him again, as it is expressed there; who undervalue and despite the Church of God, and those means which Christ Jesus hath instituted in his Church for renewing of such as are fallen. To such it is impossible, because

because there are no other ordinarie means possible; but that is not thy case, thy case is onely a doubt that those means that are shall not be applied to thee. And even that is a slipperie state, to doubt of the mercie of God to thee in particular: this goes so neare making thy sinne greater then Gods mercie, as that it makes thy sinne greater then dayly adulteries, dayly murders, dayly blaspheming, dayly profaning of the sabbath could have done. And though thou canst never make that true in this life, that thy sinnes are greater then God can forgive; yet this is a way to make them greater then God will forgive.

Now to collect both our exercises, and to connect both texts, Christ judgeth all men, and Christ judgeth no man; he claims all judgement, and he disavows all judgement; & they consist well together. He was at our creation, but that was not his first scene. The *Arians*, though they say, *Erat quando non erat*, There was a time when Christ was not, (intimating that he had a beginning, and therefore was a creature) yet they will allow that he was created before the generall creation, and so assisted at ours. But he was infinite generations before that, in the bosome of his Father, at our election; and there in him was executed the first judgement of separating those which were his, the elect from the reprobate: And then he knows who are his by that first judgement, and so comes to his second judgement, to seal all those in the visible Church with the outward mark of his Baptisme, and the inward

mark of his spirit. And those whom he
calls so, he sanctifies, sanctifies, and brings them to
this third judgement, to an established and perpe-
tual glory, and to all judgement is his. But then
removes out of humane affections and passions, by
abstraction and calumnie, as they did to whom he
spoke at this time, so he judgeth no man, so he de-
meth judgement. To usurp upon this jurisdiction of
others, or to exercise any other judgement then
was committed to him, is his pretended Vice
does. So he judgeth no man, so he disavows all
judgement, to judge so as that our condemnation
may be irremediable in this life, So he judgeth no
man, so he forswears all judgement. *As I live*, saith
the Lord of hosts, and, *As I have died*, saith the
Lord Jesus, I judge none. Acknowledge his first
judgement, thy election in him, cherish his second
judgement, thy justification by him, breathe and
part after the third judgement, thy crown of
glorie for him, intend not upon the right of other
men, which is the first, defame not, calumnie
not other men, which is the second, lay not the
name of reprobate in this life upon any man, which
is the third judgement that Christ disavows here,
and then thou shalt have well understood and well
practised both these texts, *The Father hath commit-
ted all judgement to the Sonne*, and yet *The Sonne
judgeth no man*.

